

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Hungary	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Rail and Bus Travel in the Border Zone (RE: BORDER CONTROLS TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION)	DATE DISTR.	13 October 1955
DATE OF INFO.		NO. OF PAGES	2
PLACE ACQUIRED		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD
DATE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	

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This is UNEVALUATED
Information

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

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1. The border zone of Hungary was considered to be the area 40 to 50 km. in depth from the Austrian and Yugoslav borders. Special permits had to be obtained from the police in order to visit this zone. In addition, a civilian had to have an identification card and a working (employment) card; all men had to have a military card in their possession. Border-zone residents had special border zone ID cards and commuter-workers who traveled to and from the border had special passes.
2. Travelers to the border zone always had to take the shortest possible route from the point of origin to their destination. It was not possible to travel from one border-zone town to another by train, although such a trip could be made by bus. the reason for this restriction was that the train crossed into Austria at several places in its zig-zag route along the border. Documents were checked only in border zones and in frontier areas. All border crossings, even those into satellite countries, were strictly controlled.
3. When a train was in a border zone, passes were checked every five minutes or so by two border guards on the train. A train did not stop while these checks were being made unless a discrepancy was found.
4. At frontiers, documents and baggage were checked twice—once on the Hungarian side and once on the Czech or Rumanian side. These checks were conducted by custom guards, border guards, and the ASH (State Security Authority). The baggage check was especially strict for persons traveling on business. Foreigners from Iron Curtain countries were not checked as strictly and, sometimes, not at all; body inspections were never made. There were always several policemen making such checks together; therefore, bribery was very difficult, especially since these policemen and border guards watched each other for irregularities.
5. Baggage was usually not inspected before leaving a train station unless an international traveler had trouble with customs at the border. Because

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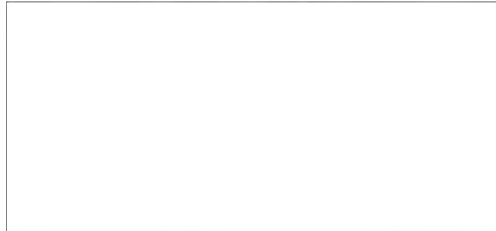
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Hungarian passengers did not cross any borders, they had no baggage check.

6. [redacted] even if individuals were in a hurry or appeared to be in a hurry, it would still be very difficult to talk one's way out of a document or baggage check or to avoid them. 25X1
7. [redacted] rail travel in unrestricted areas of Hungary seemed no different from that of Western Europe, i.e., procedures for buying tickets, obtaining track platform cards (Bahnsteigkarten), boarding trains, and entering and leaving stations; all of these could be accomplished without possessing identity cards or any special permits or passes. 25X1
8. [redacted] no priorities given to any special individuals or groups in cases of overcrowded trains nor did she know of any discrimination against any class of society as to cars, compartments, or seats they would occupy. 25X1
9. [redacted] there were no buses which ran from Budapest to the border zones. Also, that buses were not used for international travel, even to the satellite countries. However, it was possible to travel by bus within the border zone area and as long as no border zone or international boundaries were crossed, no document checks were made by either bus drivers or by guards. 25X1



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